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The Quest

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✓ THE QUEST
AND OTHER POEMS

by

E. JAMES WILLIAMS ✓

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By E. JAMES WILLIAMS

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TO
SIBYL NEVITT-WILLIAMS
MY
FLOWER-BLUE
THROUGH ALL THE YEARS

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FOREWORD

In sending forth the little poem story, "The Quest," I am hoping that its message may be felt by multitudes of men and women, who in this age may be tempted to believe that the blessings flowing to us are but matters of course, and that by proper diligence and culture, irrespective of our devotion to Christ and His Church, all are secure to us.

The author wishes to acknowledge his indebtedness to the writings of the Rev. Henry Van Dyke, some of which have inspired the writing of the first poem of the selections here presented, which the author regards as an interpretation of Mr. Van Dyke's story, "The Source."

THE AUTHOR.



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E. JAMES WILLIAMS

THE QUEST

WITH all about me dark and dreary like,
My early youthful morning sad, forlorn,
My soul o'erwhelmed with tragedy and grief,
I stood alone beside a new-made grave,
Where lay the form of one, whom just to know
Would fill one's heart with confidence to brave
Life's tragedies and win. But since he slipped
Away and left me here alone, the sky
Once bright with glorious light was overcast
With darkened shades, and pleasures seemed to die.

It was my father, idol of my life,
Whose body in the tomb, we'd laid away,
And at that time it seemed to me that strife
Came wave on wave to flood my wounded soul.
I roused myself to go, but e'er I went,
I measured off the ground where yet would be
The resting place in years and years to come,
Of each fair member of our family;
And then the little plot of earth where I,
The younger one, when life is past, shall lie
Was measured off with very special care.
A small elm tree stood close beside the spot,
Which would, in time cast forth a shadow, where
A little mound would rise upon the lot.
I wondered much how large the elm would grow,
E'er I should lay my burden down and go.

With dreamy gaze I looked across the green,
Where rugged foot-hills could be clearly seen;
And farther on, where mountains lifted high
Their lofty peaks toward the sun-lit sky;
And there beheld high on the mountain side,
A flower fair, of rarest tinge of blue,
The like of which I never saw or knew.
A sweet voice softly whispered to my soul,
That could I pluck the bloom complete and whole
Much grace I'd find, and in sweet peace abide.
While still I gazed, and wondered if I dreamed
Or really saw just what to me it seemed,
And really heard such strains of music true,
From trumpets calling, calling ever new
That flower, bluer than the bluest sky
Passed from my sight as sun drinks up the dew;
Then once again the beauty of it came,
To charm me from the saddened life I knew;
And there within the flower's bloom, behold
A maiden's face appeared, more fair than gold;
Then as the mist, or as on wings of thought
It soared away; but ah, the things it wrought!
The trumpet call had told me, told me true,
That somewhere I would find the Flower-Blue,
And waves of peace would in my soul abound,
On land or sea, wherever it is found.

'Twas as a lad I started forth to find
The Flower-Blue and peace to soul and mind.
Year in, year out, I wandered to and fro
In quest of peace, o'er mountain, hill and vale,
In every land where travelers might go,
Or o'er the deep blue sea, by steam and sail,—
On waters calm, serene, or tossed and torn
By tempests fierce and strong, of mercy shorn.

At last one day I came upon a land
Hard by a barren waste of desert sand,
Where I beheld a city, wondrous fair,
Snug, nestling 'neath the shade of mountains, where
The morning sun makes every peak shine forth,
And fills the valley with a joyous mirth.
So vastly different from the desert's gloom,
I wondered much to see the garden's bloom—
As fair and aromatic as the rose,
Semetric, clean and with artistic pose;
And yet on every side was burning sands,
Where wild beasts rove in hungry savage bands,
Or rugged mountains covered o'er with stones,
And thick with brambles almost to their cones.

With quickened step and lighter heart I came
Into the streets where I might learn its name,
And maybe find some food and drink and rest.
My soul was thrilled as children's voices fell
Upon my ears; for I could quickly tell
That every sound bespoke their happy glee;
It cheered my heart, it greatly strengthened me;
For everywhere the children were at play,
With songs of gladness bursting on the way.

The evening sun was closing his day's race
And cast a streaming flash of golden glow,
O'er all the city, 'neath the caps of snow,
Like sunbeams bursting on a maiden's face.
I noticed here and there, broad channels, filled
With sparkling water, seemingly distilled,
It was so pure, and flowing toward a pool
Of purest marble in the park, where cool
And shady flowers welcomed all to rest.
Within this pool of water clear and warm,

The youth and children play and bathe at will.
Out from the channels, trenches everywhere
Were filled with water running deep and still,
Till all the fields its rich refreshings share.

No public Inn was there. When strangers came,
The homes of hospitality were free,—
This I was told by men upon the street,
And my experience has found it true.
I stood before a cottage home and rapped
A gentle knock. A quick firm step
Came softly to the door. A man of glad
Calm face had answered to my call, and bade
Me doubly welcome to his humble home:
“No strangers lack for cheerful care and room,
Who to this peaceful city chance to come.
Be seated gentle sir, while my good Dell
Prepares for thee the evening meal; and tell
Us Friend, the while, from whence thou camest here,
And I will take this window seat so I,
With ease may hear thee, as the sun bends low.”
The old man bowed his head with easy grace
And settled down to listen to my tale.
I found it not within my heart to tell
In full the things for which he kindly asked.
I told him not of all I hoped to gain,
Or that which was my quest o’er hill and dale,
But that I chanced, in wandering o’er the plain,
To spy this city, blooming like a rose,
Just as the day was drawing to a close,
As though dropped from out the sky above,
To bless the world with beauty, peace and love,
For here amidst this barren waste of sand
This city lives, a happy, peaceful land;
And fragrant flowers are springing from the sod

As though this were the Paradise of God.
"I'm anxious now to know the truth," said I,
"Of this fair city's power of life, and why."

Again he bowed his head. His face assumed
Expressions of a deeply mov-ed soul.
He seemed in awe, yet there was naught he feared!
His fingers gently stroked his flowing beard,—
As purely white as fields of driven snow,—
But what his thoughts might be, no one could know.
His vision was as one who looks afar,—
A look of faith which nothing seems to mar,—
'Twas out beyond the limits of the room—
Beyond the fragrance of the garden's bloom,
To some great theme that seemed to please him
 well,—
On which his soul delighted much to dwell.

I saw him beckon with his eyes to One
To me unknown, and smile at the response
He felt within his soul. My soul was calm.
Profoundest stillness filled the very air:
He closed his eyes and breathed a silent prayer.
Awakening, as from a pleasant dream,
That caused a light upon his face to gleam,
He looked at me and smiled. Then he began:
"It was not always thus," his story ran,
"There is a charming story to be told,—
A story grand, but sad,—it is so old
That many people have forgotten it.
This city filled with bloom, with tranquil peace,
With life, with childish cheer and happiness—
Was once forlorn with wreck and wretchedness,
Was called 'Forsaken,' in those yesterdays,
Whereas we call it 'Peace,' the 'House of Praise.'

'Twas in that dark and far off yesterday,
That many of our people moved away,
Because the water channels all had dried;
The ground was parched, and vegetation died;
And all who could not go were famishing:
No water could be had for love or gold,
To quench the burning thirst of young or old,
While desert plains stretched out 'twixt them and
life.

"When all seemed lost, one day a stranger came:
We knew him not, nor yet could call his name.
Though he was poor, and young in human years,
The city's dire distress moved him to tears:
'The channels leading from the Source are clogged,'
He said, 'by enemies of man and God!'
'What can be done?' they cried in open grief,
(Though none supposed that he could bring relief.)
'Some one must find the Source,' came clear his call,
'And open it, and bring free life to all.'

"At early dawn, with chosen three or four,
The stranger started forth to find once more
The hidden spring. No one was found to guide
The way, that led far up the mountain side:
It once was clear and plain, but now was strewn
With brush and thorns, with sharp and piercing
stones,
Which cut and bruised their feet to bleeding sore;
Yet on they pressed, still on! But long before
The sun had marked the hour of noon,—e'er he
Had passed the zenith of his westward way,
The few had dropped behind, while He who led
The way, with steady tread, passed on alone.
Beside the path and near the river brink,

The Few sat down to rest the while, and think,—
To sooth and bind their bruised and bleeding feet.
The little morsel they had brought to eat,
Was hard and stale. Their throats were parched and
dry

They knew not where to go—return and die,
Or hasten on along the rock-strewn path.
The sun was clear and sultry hot. They grew
More faint from hunger, thirst and intense heat,
That seemed to mock their want of food and drink.

“Then, presently they saw along the racks
Of sand, clear water bursting from His tracks.
The river bed was dry, and partly filled
With leaves and every kind of trash. But thrilled
With new-found hope they hastened down to see
If, after all the old canal might be
Once more the joy and pride of all: for once
It led the life-stream floods to fields below.
Then lo, they saw the tinkling streams that go
Like beads of diamonds, sparkling here and there
Amidst the old gray rocks. Then everywhere,
Wee, tiny springs of glistening water, clear
And pure as morning dew-drops in the Spring,
Came bubbling forth from either side. The sight
Amazed, and gladdened them. They hastened on
Along the way their stranger Friend had gone.

“At last they came upon an open court,
Which looked as though it had been fixed for sport,
Or summer outings, where large numbers could
Convene for purposes of mutual good.
No trash remained beneath the shady trees,
Through which there passed a gentle flowing breeze.
They paused awhile beneath the cooling shade,
Where gentle zephyrs bathed their burning cheeks,

And wiped the perspiration from the brow.
They glanced about to see what they had found,
And saw nearby a huge gigantic cleft
Within a mighty rock,—just to the left,—
A little chapel built. It had been hewn,
It seemed, from out a solid marble block
Of pure and burnished white. Beneath the rock,
And through the open cleft there flowed a stream
Of crystal water pure and sweet. Sometimes
'Twould splash across the rocks below; and then
Again 'twould sink away as though 'twas lost.

“They humbly bowed and whispered words of praise,
To Him who guided them in all their ways.
Then as they looked within the crystal spring,
They seemed to hear glad angel voices sing.
To meet their earnest gaze and prayer, behold,
The water raised like waves of shining gold,
Until it filled the basin to the brim,
And gently rippled o'er the topmost rim;
Then running through the chapel's open door,
It poured its wealth down toward the barren fields.
Thus on its sparkling waves it carried life
To we poor city folk, far, far below.

“Again they bowed in thoughtful, solemn prayer:
The fount of life was opened wide, but there
Beside the stream, just to the chapel's left,
A little back, near by the open cleft,
The Stranger, who had wrought this joy and cheer,
Lay still in death. An angel hovered near.
They saw a likeness 'neath the crystal wave,
As it would rise to greet their gaze and prayer;
They knew it well: They praised His love and care.
Since that glad day, our city's happy hours,

Are rich with peace, and filled with fragrant flowers;
With choicest fruits our trees are bending low;
With highest joys our hearts are all aglow.
At morning, noon and night, through all the years—
The pleasure of it drives away our fears—
The beaten mountain track that marks the way,
Is trod by many feet. It seems but play,
For rich and poor, for great and small, for youth
And children too,—yes all who know the truth,
At some glad hour go passing to and fro,
To visit yonder fount, and lisp the name
Of Him who sends us life within the flow,
Which rises up to greet our daily prayer:
For still He lives, and ever meets us there!"
The story done, my host bowed low his head,
And breathed a prayer of praise, in which I could
Unite with him with profit and for good.

The morning brought a new and glorious day,
That challenged me in a most pleasing way,
To see the city in her splendid life,
And realize her freedom from all strife,
To find the secret of her happiness,
That seemed to measure up so near to bliss.

At very early morn, long e'er the sun
His upward climb had fairly well begun,
I passed the marble pools, where at their play,
Were many happy children, blythe and gay.
Their shouts and laughter made the echoes ring
With melodies as sweet as early Spring.
Beyond the park, nearby the further side,
I saw a path: 'twas very steep and wide;
It was so smooth and broad that one would know
That many feet passed o'er it to and fro.

As I stood near the early worshipers
Were coming forth. Sometimes the companies
Were large, sometimes were small; and then again
By threes and fours, or mayhap, one lone man;
And thus the people marching to the Source
Came joyously: It was their daily course.
Some groups were softly singing as they came,
In sweetest accents to some sacred name,
While some conversed, and thus the time was spent;
But all seemed happy with a blest content.

“What do these men, who, working all the day,
Have not the time to pause awhile and pray?”
I asked of one who joined me on the way,
Whose countenance was as radiant as the day,
“I wonder why they thus neglect the Source,
From which the city’s life and bloom must come?”
“This way,” said he, “was passed by some of these
Long e’er the sun arose above the trees,
Who have returned to where their daily tasks
Require their service early in the day,
While some of them prefer this hour for play.
Some, too, have planned a later time to go,
That they may worship as the sun bends low;
And others still will never go at all:
They heed it not—the trumpet’s daily call.
They say the time is squandered,—worse than lost—
That all the gain is never worth the cost,
To those who spend the best of every day,
In visiting a mountain spring this way.
‘Ah yes,’ they say, ‘the water always will
Flow down our deep canals, and more than fill
Our cisterns and our wells, and flood our fields,
And still we’ll have abundant harvest yields,
Though all should cease their visits to the Source,

And spend the time in working every day,
Instead of idle folly,—worse than play’;
And yet to us it seems the power of life,
That lifts us up above the world of strife.”

The further way that led to heights above,
Was very steep and smooth. Here children loved
To go, and pluck the flowers as they went.
To me the way seemed short. Indeed, long, long
Before the gentle sun had kissed the dew
From off the flower blossoms as they grew,
On either side the path so rank and strong,
I caught the clear sweet notes of happy song,
That came from voices close beside the spring,
Where every one who goes delights to sing.

When we at last had reached the open court,
We there beheld those in the bloom of youth,
The very young, and those bent o’er with age,
Bowed side by side in quest of precious truth;
They sang the praise of Him who long ago,
Had found the Source of life. They sought to know
The power by which, for all the city, he
Unclogged the source, and sacrificed His life.
To meet the strains of music they could see,
The springing water rise to fill the streams
And channels to the brim, and speed its life
To orchards, fields and meadow-lands below.
I wondered if the Flower-Blue might be
Somewhere within this bounteous field of green,
Or hid beside some mountain crag or stream,
Or mayhap, yonder by the deep blue sea?
The journey down the broad, smooth shaded path,
’Midst gleeful singing of the happy throng,
Was full of inspiration to my soul,

So that I joined the music of their song.
Once down again, the river seemed more full,—
More joyous was the murmur of its flow;
And there I saw the men who turned aside,
To make new channels through some barren fields,
Where vegetation had not grown before.
In passing through the city I beheld
The great strong water-wheels of all the mills
That ground the corn, whirl faster than before;
And maidens fair, with pitchers came to draw
From brimming fountains all along the streets;
And children laughing, for the marble pools
Were full and warm so they could swim in them;
And water was abundant everywhere.

For many weeks I tarried in this place,
And spent much time in going here and there:
Of mornings going up the mountain path,
And then returning to the work of day,
And to the evening full of joyous play.

I found kind friends among the city folk:
Not only those who oft together walk
In daily visitation to the Source,
But also those who, by their habits force,
Had sometimes tarried in the field or shop,
Because they thought that business must not stop,
And yet they all were sharing in the good,
That flowed to them within the fountain's flood.
They all were generous, kind and true, and seemed
Contented with their lot: the city teemed
With pleasures overflowing with delight.
Through all the day and far into the night,
While at their work or play they seemed to feast
On one gay round of happiness and peace.

They were by nature of a race of those
Who ever dwell contented in one place:
In thought, indeed, they went not far abroad;
But I was ever restless, looking for
Some strange and unknown 'something' far away.
Nor did they seem to understand me more
Than I could fathom them, and for this cause
They viewed me as a stranger, alien, guest.

The one among them all with whom I felt
The most at home who seemed to understand
Me most, was fair-eyed, pretty Amoret,
The charming daughter of the son of my
Kind hearted host, (her parents both were dead,)
Just turned sixteen: she was so quick to feel,
And answer all the newness of each day
That dawned. And should a stranger-bird fly down
From mountain crag to garden, it was she
Who saw it first, and wondered at it most.
Of mornings fair she often went with me
Into the fields, and almost every day,
She found wild flowers that, to me were new;
And when the sun was sinking low she drew
Me in with games that youth and children know
And love, where her rich fancy never tired
Of weaving strange new forms to many a game;
Then in the dusk of evening she would sit
Beside me 'neath the honeysuckle bower,
And question me about the strange blue flower,—
For oft to her I'd spoken of my quest.

"And is it blue?" she asked me once again,
"Blue as the speedwell yonder by the brook?"
"Ah yes, much richer is its blue—more than
The river's depth is deeper than the spring."

"And is it bright, bright as the drops of dew
That glisten in the moon-light over there?"
"'Tis as much brighter than the drops of dew
As noon-day sun is brighter than the moon."
"And is it sweet," she asked, "as sweet and pure
As honeysuckle blooms whene'er the day
Is full of merry sunshine, warm and still?"
"Much sweeter than the honeysuckle bloom,
As night is stiller and more sweet than day."
Her sweet melodious voice was rich and clear,
As once again she asked: "Tell me once more,
Where did you see a flower so rich and blue?
Why seek you for it still? Pray tell me true?"

"I saw it first when I was but a boy,
No older I suppose than nine or ten.
Our house looked out toward the distant hills,
And further on against the Eastern sky,
It looked upon the sunset's softest blue.
How lonely was the hour! 'Twas on the day
That we had laid my father's form away
To rest among the cedar trees.
There were the graves
Of Father's father, and his father too;
And there were places left for Mother's grave,
My sister's, my two brothers', and myself:
I counted all of them.

"The others all
Had left the place with sad and mournful hearts,
And had returned in silence to the house.
Back in the corner near the western side,
A small young Elm tree grew: that was to be
My place, for I was youngest of them all.
How tall would be the little tree by then?

I'd never thought of it that way before!
It seemed to make me restless, worn and sad.
I wished for something,—knowing not just what;
Yet longing most of all to see the world,
And taste of happiness before I slept
Beneath its gentle shade.

“And then I looked across toward the blue
And shadowy hills, all dark and dreamy like,
The boundary of the little world I knew.
Within a cleft between the highest peaks
I saw a wondrous thing: It seemed the place
At which I looked was coming nearer me,—
Yes nearer where I was; and then the trees,
The rocks, the ferns, the white and winding road
Appeared before my gaze. Enfolding hills
Unfolded like the leaves, and in the heart
Of them I saw a Flower-Blue, so bright,
So beautiful, that as I looked my eyes
Were filled with tears.

'Twas like a face that smiled at me,
And promised something sweet and pure;
And then I heard a call like clear full tones
Of trumpets very far away. It seemed
The clarion notes were calling me to come;
And as I listened to the trumpets call,
The dazzling beauty of the Flower-Blue
Had faded to the dimness of the hills.

Her blue eyes sparkled with intensest fire!
“And did you heed the call and follow it?
And did you leave your home and all your friends?
You surely could not do a thing like that!”
She cried with panting breath and hands clasped
tight.

"Indeed I did, as soon as I was free,
And old enough, I started forth to find
What this great world might have in store for me."
"What then, the Flower-Blue, in all the years,
Have you not seen it anywhere since then?"
"Ah yes, my child, I've seen it many times:
One morning fair, not many years ago,
Its dazzling beauty came when I was out
At sea. A long and stormy voyage o'er
The waters blue was nearly at its close.
My dearest friend had said good-bye to me,
As he was leaving me for his return
To his own country, and his father's house:
But onward still I journeyed in my quest.
Then dark and lonely thoughts stole in my breast,
As rough the waves beat high against the ship.
When morning dawned upon the waters blue,
We sighted land: Its name I never knew;
Our ship plowed on and left it far behind.

"In passing near a cabin door I heard
A deep sad moan; it was a sailor boy.
I entered, took his hand,—his fever raged!
There seemed no one to care, or bring relief.
I gave him medicine from out my chest,
And tenderness from voice and hand and heart;
Then left him resting in a quiet sleep,
And came upon the deck; and as I stood
Upon the bow of our good ship as she
Went sailing out amidst the wide blue sea,
Out far away among the sparkling waves,
I saw a little island with bright shores
Of silver sand, and slopes of richest green,
And in the middle of the Island there,
The Flower-Blue was blooming, wondrous fair

And dazzling, brighter than the sapphire of
The sea. My heart was glad. And then the call
Of distant trumpets came. It floated out
Across the waters still, and then, ah then,
A shimmering fog swept o'er the land and hid
It from my view, and it was seen no more.

"I called again to see the sailor boy:
My entrance wakened him. He smiled at me,
And in that smile of gratitude I saw
The faintest image of the Flower-Blue.
The few days more before we came to port,
We were the best of friends, and chatted much
About the things that interested each.
We parted on the shore,—he for his home,
And I, to hasten on in my strange quest."

"Then tell me," quoth the pretty maid, and fair,
"Then tell me, was the island true or no?
And was the Flower-Blue not there at all?
Or was it but a graphic dream you saw?"

"Why, sure I am it was no simple dream,
Although, perhaps it might to you thus seem!
Indeed, in truth, I saw the lonely land,
Where grew the lovely flower, grand and fair!
The pretty island with its silver sand,
I never saw again. The ship sailed on
Another way and left it far behind.

"But once again I saw the Flower-Blue:
'Twas just three days before I came to you.
Out in the edge of yonder desert plain,
Close 'neath the shadow of the mountains tall,
Where wolf and panther prowl, or lurk for prey,—

Where hideous noises by night and day,
Made sleep and rest almost impossible.
A fearful loneliness so vast and wild
Surrounded me on every side: it seemed
That I alone was all the living soul,
That still remained upon the great, wide earth;
And in that sad wild loneliness I longed
Once more to see the dwelling place of man.
The last night out was quieter. I slept
And dreamed of loved ones far, so far away.

"When morning came and I awoke, I looked,
And saw the dark blue ridge of mountains wild;
And there against the bright blue of the sky,
I saw the Flower-Blue stand clear and brave.
It shown so deep and pure the sky grew pale
About it,—in the circle where it stood,
And then the echo of the trumpet, far
Away, came drifting down the mountain sides.
The sun arose in splendor o'er the hills,
And then the flower melted into light.
Then I arose and traveled on until
I came, by chance, to this fair city, where
Sweet flowers bloom, and fragrance fills the air."

"And now you are at home with us," she cried,
"And will you not a very long while stay?
For you may find the Flower-Blue among
The city's blooming fields: I find some new
And lovely flowers most every day."

"I'll stay the longest time I can, sweet girl,"
I answered her. Then with her hand in mine
We strolled back to the house at fall of night.
"But just how long it may be, I cannot tell;

You are quite right, I am at home with you,
And yet the place where I must long abide,
Is that fair land in which the flower grows,
And when the trumpet call sounds in my ear,
Then I must follow on without a fear."

Then looking at me half in doubt, she said,
"I think I understand." Her voice was calm;
Her eyes betrayed more feeling than she thought.
"I hope, wherever you may go, you'll find,
In some fair land the Flower-Blue at last."

In that strange city there were many things
That made me restless, and which troubled me;
And this was true in spite of all the sweet
And pleasant friendships of my Amoret,
And of the city's tranquil, quiet life.

I studied long and carefully the tone,
And trend of thought that I had often heard
Expressed by those who never trod the way,
With worshipers, who, daily to the Source,
Went up for prayer and song and who believed
The story of the Source, and that it was
Their very life. These men gave not to it,
But gladly took the blessings that flowed down
The river from the never failing spring,
Without a thought from whence it all had come.
I came to understand the meaning of the words,
My host had spoken, of the shadow dark,
That rested gloomily upon his thoughts;
For there were some within the city, who
Declared the hours of visitation to
The Source were wasted, and 'twould better be
That men should gather water from the pools

That form among the mountains when it rains,
Or sink new wells along the desert's edge;
While others, newly to the city come,
Had taught, "There is no Source," and that the tale
That men had told of some poor man who came,
And had re-opened it, was nothing more
Than idle fables, cunningly devised,
And that the hours of visitation were
But hours of useless dreaming,—nothing else.
And many, too, believed their story true;
And many more declared, it mattered not
Which way they taught, or how they were believed,
Or whether what they said was true or false;
That it was small concerned that men should go
In daily visits to some open fount,
Just so they work the gardens properly,
And kept the basins and the marble pools
In good repair, and opened new canals,
Through all the fields, since there had always been,
And always, through the coming years, would be,
Fresh water in abundance everywhere.

As I would listen to these things, it seemed
Extremely doubtful what the end would be.
And while this doubt was lingering in my mind,
At midnight, faint and low, I heard the call
Of trumpets towering high above the plain:
And as I looked to see from whence it came,
Through glimmering veils, as of the milky-way,
I saw amidst the dim light of the stars,
The shapely blossom of celestial blue,
Whose petals seemed to fade and fall away
As I beheld.

And so I bade farewell
To my good friend, whose house had been my home;

In which I learned to love the early hours
Of visitation to the Source, and learned
To speak the name of Him who opened it.
I kissed the hands and brow of Amoret,
Who, strange enough had entered in my life,
And went forth sadly from the Koerma land,
To other climes to find the Flower-Blue.

II.

Ten full, long years of weary search passed by,
Of which a detailed record may be seen,
Full entered in the "Book of Voyages
Without a Harbor," kept for travelers,
E'er I came back to see how fared the town,
Where many happy summer days were spent,
In company with those I'd learned to love,
And yet from whom no word had come to me,
Since that bright morning when I said 'Good-bye',
And started forth upon a journey, which
Perchance might bring me to the Flower-Blue.

The city seemed most difficult to find;
For as I came o'er mountains, cold and bleak,
And looked from high upon the shoulder of
The hills to see—if still it might be there—
The little bay of superb greenery,
It nowhere could be seen, although I scanned
The landscape carefully with my fieldglass.
The only place that I could recognize,
Was but a strange white town, whose shining far
Against the dark brown hills looked like a flake
Of mica in the cleft of mammoth rocks.

Then full of care I slept that night upon
The barren hillside; and before the dawn

I rose and came in early morning toward
The city where aforesaid flowers bloomed,
And children were exulting in their play.

The fields lay parching in the burning sun,
Although as yet the day had just begun.
Great cracks gaped open in the earth, as though
No rain had fallen, and the pools were dry.
The trenches all were there, and seemed intact,
And channels everywhere coursed through the fields,
But they were empty, all but tiny streams,
Which slowly crept along the bottoms of
The old canals which used to flow brim full.

The vineyards, too, were rusty and decayed;
From these I heard, instead of cheerful songs
Of vintages, the creaking sounds of dry,
Old windlasses, the dull hoarse throb of pumps
In sunken wells, and murmurings of men.
The circle of the gardens too, had shrunk,
Like wreaths of flowers withering in the sun;
And all the bright embroidery of the earth,
Had faded to a sad and sullen gray.

Beneath an ancient, leafless olive tree,
I saw a group of people kneeling by
A newly opened well. A man with spade
Was digging in the earth most furiously;
Whom, when I asked him what their kneeling meant,
Replied, "They're worshiping the windless, sir!
How else could they bring water to the fields?"
And having wiped the sweat from off his brow,
He fell to work again; and I passed on.

There were no sounds of murmuring streams along

The streets; and down the main canal I saw
A few small shallow puddles, joined to each
By slowly trinkling threads, and even these
Were guarded so that none might use of them:
And here and there, were men along the streets
With water-skins upon their backs, who cried:
"We've water! water! water! here for sale!"

And in the open square the marble pools
Were empty, dry, and looked a faded brown.
And near to one of these I saw a crowd
Of people looking at a man who then
Was being beaten on the back with rods.
A gentleman who stood nearby told me,
That officers had ordered him thus lashed,
Because he had declared that all the pools,
The basins and canals had not been made
Of purest marble, and without a flaw,
As many people had supposed they were.
"This is an evil doctrine that has come,"
Said he, "To take away the glory and
The peace of our fair city, and because
Of this the water courses all have failed."
"It surely is a sad, sad change," said I,
"And doubtless those who brought it all about,
Should suffer more than other people must.
But friend, can you inform me at what hour,
And just the way in which the people now
Observe the visitations of the Source?"
He looked at me most curiously, and said:
"I surely do not understand you, sir!
There is no visitation, only the
Inspection of the cisterns and the wells,
Which Water Princes carry on each day.
But what about the 'Source' of which you speak?"

I told the simple story, and the gleam
That filled his dark gray eyes most clearly told
The thirsty lodging of a weary soul
I pointed to the way that used to be
So broad and smooth that any one might see
The beaten path from any street or lane;
Then near the distant cleft above the spring
I saw a glimmer of celestial blue,
And felt the thrill of happiness, until
The man with whom I'd spoken slipped away,
And he was seen no more; and then the blue
Sank back amongst the dark and gloomy hills.

So I passed on along the busy streets,
Where all the passers-by seemed over-much
In haste, and all wore weary countenances,
Until I stood before the cottage door,
Where I had lodged so many years before.
A little basin fixed against the wall,
Where was a slender stream of water, pure
As morning dew, still flowing into it,
And groups of children standing near to fill
Their empty pitchers from the living stream.

The cottage door was closed, but when I knocked,
It opened, and a gentle maid came forth:
She was so pale, and of a sad aspect;
But as the light of joy dawned o'er the snow
Of her sweet face, I knew she was the same
Dear charming girl who used to walk with me
Through fields and gardens fair, so long ago.
With both her hands she welcomed me, and said,
"You are expected here: But have you found
The Flower-Blue for which you were in quest?"
"Not yet," I answered her, "but something drew

Me back, that I once more might be with you;
That I might know how well you've fared since I
Departed long ago. I would again
Accompany you, and kneel beside the Source,
And worship there as in the days of yore."
At this her face grew bright. A happy smile
Danced in her bright blue eyes: "The Source!" she
cried,

"Ah yes, I knew you would remember it!
How glad I am that you have come! The hour
Is now at hand; come then, and let us go
Together to this sacred place of power!"
So we passed out amidst the weary throngs,
Along the street toward the mountain path,
So much forsaken now, and strewn with stones,
And overgrown with wire-grass, that I
Could not have found it, but for her as guide.

I questioned her about the many things
Which in my absence had been brought about:
The kind old man who once had taken me
Into his house, when I a stranger came:
"What has become of him? Does he still live?"
She very softly answered, "He is dead."
"And where are all the men and women, those,
Who were his friends, and trod this way with him?"
Again she answered, "They are also dead."
"But where are all the younger ones who sang
So merrily as they would march along,
Most surely some of them are living still?"
Then with a sigh: "They have forgotten it."
"Why then have you alone kept up the hours—
The hours of visitation to the Source?
How does it come that you, of all of them,
Have thus maintained the custom of the years?"

Indeed, pray tell me, why have you not turned
Again with your companions and your friends,
And sought alone the pleasures of the world?
How could you walk this mountain way alone,
Which everybody else has quite forgot?"
She turned with a regard almost divine,
And laid her hand most gently over mine,
And said, "I always shall remember it!"
Beside the grass-grown path there were but few
Wild flowers blooming as the sun
Poured in from o'er the eastward mountain tops.

We soon came near the Source, and came within
The chamber, hewn from out the solid rock.
She kneeled, and bending o'er the sleeping spring,
She murmured o'er and o'er again the name
Of Him who gave his life to open it;
She softly chanted once again the song,
That erst was sung by voices of a throng.
Her tears fell gently in the spring, and as
They fell, it seemed as if the water stirred,
And rose to meet her bending form and face.
When she at last arose it looked as though
The morning dew had fallen on a flower.
We came but slowly down the mountain path,
And rested oft beside the river brink,
For I had thought the rising of the spring,
Would send more water down its old dry bed,
And some of it must flow out in the fields,—
And so 'twas eventide when we returned.
The streets were filled with people everywhere,
Who seemed intent in hastening to and fro,
But there were few who seemed to notice us,
As like mere strangers we had passed along,
And came unnoticed to the cottage door.

'Twas then a great desire of ardent love,
And waves of sorrow moved within my breast.
I took her hand in mine, and softly said:
"You are the city's life, for you alone,
Among them all remember whence it comes;
The secret is with you. The very life
Of this fair city now depends on just
How faithfully you still observe and keep
The hours of visitation to the Source.
The task is great! Now let me stay with you,
Sweet soul of all the flowers dead:
Forever let me keep and cherish you?
Together to the Source with every day,
We'll keep the visitations, and shall turn
The people by our lives, and by our words,
Back to the way they sometime have forgot."

There came into her eyes a smile so deep,
That its full meaning never can be told.
She placed her hand upon her lips, and said:
"Alas dear friend, but who of us can tell
What Fate will bring to this sad city yet,
Or whether men will never see the way,
Or whether they will ever more forget!
Its lot is mine, for in it I was born,
And here my earthly ties are rooted deep.
With you it is not so: you are of those
Whose feet can never rest until their task
Of error is complete, their lesson learned.
Till then go forth! But please do not forget,
I always shall remember, and be true!"

Behind her voice I heard the silent call,
By which I am impelled and moved to act.
I told her then, by many words, and true:

"It has been learned, my darling, learned of you!"
I looked into her eyes, and as I looked,
The setting sun made golden circled rays
About her head; and then the bright and strange
Twin blossoms of celestial blue shown forth
Within her tranquil eyes. They answered me.
I clasped her to my throbbing heart, and cried:
"Sweet Love, I've found at last my Flower-Blue,
And find its promises are more than true!"

* * *

Since then the city has been taught to know
Again the Source and Power of its life;
Once more the mountain path is broad and smooth;
Once more the fragrant flower gardens bloom;
Once more the children laugh and play, and bathe
And swim at will within the marble pools;
And I have found my Flower-Blue and joy
In Amoret, who taught me at the Source,
And in the service I may render those,
Whom Providence has ever brought me near,
Who are in need of kindness, love and cheer.
—1916.

THE ANSWER DIVINE

In all the realms of Nature, everywhere,
To every needy call an answer came:
Jehovah spoke in language man could hear,
In Eden's morning, and at night, the same.

No need was felt, but that was found supplied,
By God's most gracious love, and thoughtful care.
In Nature, everywhere this law applied;
And so it was to Eden's happy pair.

But sin came in, and destinies were changed,
And human souls in helpless anguish cried;
But Nature gave no answer. God was pained.
The souls He made for Life, by sin had died.

Then by a special act of love divine,
God made a way by which to save the man.
"Though slain by sin, redemmed, they shall be mine!
A chance for Life, I'll give to them again!"

The Universe was searched, but searched in vain,
To find a balm to heal the wounded soul;
At last the Lamb, from Earth's foundation, slain,
Alone had power to heal and make it whole.

Jehovah God, with message filled with love
To creature, man, who sinned and went astray,
Swept into Eden's garden from above,
And walked and talked with him at cool of day.

From then till now our needs are all supplied;
To every soul the promise has been given.
By Christ our Lord and Saviour, crucified,
The sorrow-cry of Earth is heard in heaven.
—1905.

OPPORTUNITIES

You say that almost everywhere you go,
There seems to be a feeling, more and more
That there's some fault with Christian service now,
More than there used to be; but just in what
This serious fault may be, you find it not,
And yet the fault exists. May I then ask
That you explain wherein it may be found?
O yes, you say, 'The Gospel does not reach
The people with the story it would teach;
The Christian teaching ever fails to sound
The depths of human sorrow, pain and woe,
Till men have sought some otherwhere to go.'

Alas, alas! 'Tis not because the Church
Has had no message adequate to prove
Itself a benefactor to the race,—
To lift the soul to heights of unknown joy,
And give to man true visions of his God!
This fault you see,—and it is there I'm sure,—
May be in this: That we've not measured up
In our acceptance of the message pure,
Thus shift the blame to our own negligence.
No plan, however perfect and divine,
Can yield a blessing to the human soul,
Unless the plan is worked out as a whole.

"Cannot be done, except in theory wild?"
It seems to me it can, by any child
Or man or woman, where-so-e'er they be.
Ah, for the proof, you're anxious now to see?
The gospel message, calling from above,
Would win all men to happiness and love—
Would touch each human need, heal every wound,
Until not one discordant note would sound,—

Until each life, with harmony sublime
Would shed forth glories of the Christ Divine.
The gospel answers every human need,
If man would give it just the proper heed.

The Church at Edenford has tried the plan,
And in the work enlisted every man,
To search for people everywhere, and bring
To them the richest blessing that is meet.
Out there they find one hungry, sick and poor;
To him they furnish food, and oft the skill
Of trained physicians, all as free as air;
And soon he's back to vigor, health and strength.
And then employment to him they give;
They give him strength wherein they find him weak,
And show him how a better life to seek,
By calling out the virtues all they can,
Thus helping him to be a helpful man.

Another one is lonely and forlorn,—
Away from home, and those for whom he cares,—
Feels most forgotten—save for some one's prayers.
They bring him to the reading rooms where he
Is met and welcomed, made to feel at home,—
Where he can sit and read, or write, or play
At wholesome games, or lay him down to rest,
Or talk to pleasant friends, as suits him best.
The atmosphere is wholesome, pure and good,
And one who enters here is made to feel
That Christian service, when so understood,
Is what the world is looking for, and would
Respond with open soul to its appeal.

One day there came a stranger to our town;
She was a damsel, fair of face and form;
She seemed so friendless, out of work and poor.

As I came near I gently touched her arm:
"What ails thee, gentle Miss?" to her I said,
As she reclined amid the Park's cool shade,
Her cheeks all stained with hot and briny tears.
She looked at me with her fair eyes of blue:
"O Madam dear, could you befriend a true
But helpless girl, alone and out of work?"
"Most certainly, my little one, come here
Along with me; we'll see what can be done."
Her father and her mother both were dead,
And she was left alone. There was not one
To give her aught to do, or anywhere
To lay her weary head to rest or sleep.
We found for her a place where she could have
Fair wages for the willing service given,
Which seemed to her the gateway unto heaven.

You see, we have a list of every one
From far and near around about the Church,
Who needed any kind of service done,
And every one who works for others, and
The kind of work that they can do the best.
And when you help a man to help himself,
He feels the manhood welling in his breast;
Then he will help the cause that helps him most.
If Christian service can be so arranged
That we may know and handle every case
Of human need,—of body, mind and soul,
By helping each, no matter how estranged
To just such blessings as would make him whole,—
Would drive the heavy burdens from his life
And give him power to win this earthly strife,—
Why, then he'll listen to our message true,
Of grace divine that makes the life anew.
Give to all men such comfort as they need,—

The sympathies for which our own hearts plead;
For in such service rendered, it is shown,
That in each other's joys we find our own.

—1916

THE SWORD

O Word of God with message true and sweet,
Fraught with new life our weary souls to greet;
We hail thee with thy bright and glorious light,
To fill our hearts with holy zeal and might!
The Saviour calls for us to go afar,
As trusty soldiers in His holy war,—
 With life and love and all.

So now we grasp Jehovah's holy Word,
Which is the Spirit's mighty flaming sword,
Each hand prepared by drill, to use it well,
As over valley, mountain, hill and dell,
We hasten on, at once the work begin,
That rescues all who will, from death and sin,
 In answer to His call.

By faith we go into the conquest great,
To save our brother man, e'er 'tis too late.
And now, O Blessed Spirit, come thou near,
And fill our lives with wisdom, hope and cheer,
That we may do this work, alone for Thee,
To whom all glory, and all praise shall be:
 For Thou art Lord of all.

—1905.

LOVERS

The day was bright, the air was bracing cool;
The wind was calm, the sky was clear and fine,
And everywhere he'd look, had he so chose,
 He might have seen the Autumn beauties fair;
 Here ripened grain, while Goldenrod was there.
The summer's sun had passed, and now the wood
 Was overcast with golden tinge, and trees
Were bending low with ripened fruit, and stood
 A challenge to the hungry lad or Miss
 Who might pass by and chance to see all this.
 What tempts the eye, the taste is sure to please.

It was not this that thrilled his soul that day,
Though oft he loved these beauties grand and fair;
Nor yet, 'twas not that group at yonder play,
 Though such a game oft filled him with delight.
 No! For to him that very Autumn night,
The postman had a tiny letter brought.
 'Twas this that occupied his thought the most,—
That raised the color to his manly cheek,
 That wreathed his face in beaming happy smiles;
 'Twas more to him than all among his files:
 And it was brought by very special post.*

To him it bore a message which we dare
Scarce intimate to outside people, who
Might be too curious, and want to know,
 Much more than was their due. Yet to ourself
 We muse, and look as wise as sly old Elf.
But still this little bit we might reveal:
 'Twas from a maiden, fair as sunset glow,
With golden hair, and eyes of fairest blue.
 It bore to him a message from her heart,—

*Special delivery.

Of faith and love, that naught but death can part,
The truest thing that human hearts can know.

And, this much more—she told him he might go
In his new car and meet her at the train,
At six-fifteen that very eve, and then

She'd tell him all about her six weeks' trip,
Which she enjoyed, especially the ship,
Which sails in triumph o'er the deep, blue sea,
The only cloud that overcast her sky,
That kept her pleasure short of the supreme,
That made her feel that, after all, a home,
Was better far than thus to roam alone,
Was that her lover, dear, was not near by.

All this he said he'd known long, long before,
And yet was glad she'd made the trip alone,
For now she'd know the worth of one who can
Be all the world to such a one as she;
The one sweet girl he longed once more to see.
Thus to himself he smiled as his machine,
Sped softly down the long, smooth city street,
To meet the flyer, soon from Denver due;
On which there came one fair as jewels bright,
Whom he would see once more that very night,
He'd plant a kiss on tulips, rosy, sweet.

He drove the car up near the platform, where,
He saw a group who seemed excited, more,
Than such a time would indicate the need.

He stepped upon the station platform, and
There heard the agent shouting to the band:
"The train is wrecked! The message on the wire
Declares that Number Eight has left the rail,
Just four miles south and westward down the
track."

No other word was heard. By a single bound
He grasped the wheel, and whirled the car around,
And at full speed he swung off like a sail.

"Four miles, he said? In just five minutes then
I'll be on hand to do what e'er I can."

He put the car, which he could drive so well,
Down the smooth road, with all her speed and
power,

In that mad flight, at sixty miles an hour.
It seemed an age—those five brief minutes, though,
Before he glided up beside the train,

Where he might find—he dare not think of what!

He stopped the car, sprang to the wreck-strewn
ground,

Where soon among the wreckage there he found
Her, chushed and bleeding—unconscious of her
pain.

He saw her breathing—that was all he knew.

He quickly raised the beam that held her fast,
But she moved not, save just to turn her head,

She gave one conscious smile, then closed her eyes:

She seemed her Lover Friend to recognize.

He swung the beam that pinned her to the ground,

And let it fall where it could do no harm;

And very gently took her in his arms

And carried her across the little space,

'Tween where she was and to his car in place.

"The wreck's ablaze!" came the dread fire alarm.

No help was offered him, not scarce a look!

Each one was working in some tragic place,

To rescue injured ones from sweeping fire.

He gently placed her in the auto seat,

And made her comfort sure as it was meet,

Then helped to save from death a dozen more,
Before the rescue train swung round the curve,
Or other men with cars from town had come,
And now he swung his car, and put her down
At her best speed, the four miles into town,
And placed his charge in hands best trained to
serve.

Six long and weary weeks, with love and care,
With best of nurses and the surgeon's skill,
Revived the spark of life then almost crushed.

Now wrapped in furs on bright and sunny days,
Amidst the scenes where birds warble their praise,
She often rides where bloom the choicest flowers.

'Twould make her feel refreshed and strong they
said.

Then they would whisper of the happy Spring,
When in the pretty cottage on the hill,
Like summer balm, with not a wind to chill,
They'd live in love without a fear or dread.
—1915.

EVANGELS OF MERCY

The night was dark. The air was filled with sleet,
While dreary clouds o'ercast the midnight sky.
Alone she hastened down the grimmy street
That led toward the river bridge. To try
For life so void, and full of woe, was more
Than she could hope much longer to endure.

With tattered gown her slender form was clad,
Her hair was torn, her blood-stained feet were
bare.

She'd lost her all: to her all things were bad,
So on she fled, she cared not how nor where.
A warm red tinge crept to her faded cheek,—

She stopped her course: "My mother's love I'll seek!"

A wave of oldtime love surged through her soul,
And for a moment she resolved to turn
Her weary feet from wrong,—forsake the whole
Of sin and shame,—repudiate and spurn
All that had led her far from virtue's way:
But she was weak, and demons ruled the day.

A wild scream pierced the air: she darted on.
Then stopped once more: a mighty battle raged.
The echo of her shrieking cry had gone;
Her feeble soul with fearful powers engaged.
She almost heard the throbbing of her heart,
As she resolved her homeward way to start.

Again the mighty demon of despair
Sprang forth to crush the flickering spark of
hope.
Then on she tore with reckless speed to where,
Because with fearful odds they could not cope,
A thousand other girls had met their doom,
And where for her poor body there was room.

Here all alone! No one but God would know:
Was there a God? Ah yes, but would he care?
She'd plunge beneath the friendly waves, and go
She did not know, and cared the less, to where.
What feared she now! Her last fond hope was dead;
Beneath the waves she'd make her dying bed.

"What brought you here on such a fearful night?"
She stopped: for sure she'd heard a human voice!
She looked about, there seemed no one in sight.
Her heart beat wild,—yet she had made her choice.
A moment more there came into her view.

Two maidens fair, from whence she never knew.

Her heart stood still: she tried to slip away;

They grasped her arm, and would not let her go.

They gently taught her that a better day

Was coming,—that she should go with them, and
know

The power by which her life might be redeemed

Through Grace divine, above what she had dreamed.

* * *

Through days of council, faith and watchful prayer,

They brought to her, her womanhood again.

And now she's anxious to go anywhere,

To bring the wayward from the path of shame;

No night too dark, or street too drear or long,

But that she'll go with gladsome heart and song.

—1916.

MOTHER

O how thy hands, for me, with love have wrought!

Though oftimes weary, yet they sometimes toiled,
Far, far into the darkness of the night,

That thy fond hope for me might not be foiled.

Thy hand hath led where sweetest flowers bloom—

Hath bathed my fevered brow when I was ill.

The thought of thee, and thy sweet words of cheer,

Doth follow still, let me be where I will.

Thy smile hath gladdened many a weary hour,

As dark clouds hung athwart my childish sky,

The music of thy voice, it cheered me so,

When I was told that clouds were good, and why;

Thy steps were never faltering in their tread,

As they for me strove in the path of care,

And now, that thou art old and bent and gray,

I, still thy child, will answer this, thy prayer.

—1915.

THROUGH DIFFICULTIES

He stood all dazed beneath a crushing blow;
He scarce could raise his head, or feel his soul
Was free. Yet whence it came he did not know,
Or why it fell on him. It seemed the whole
Of this fair earth had turned to wretched bars
Of brass and iron, thrust about his way,
And everywhere he turned,—e'en toward the stars,
There seemed no end to this one dismal day.
He tried to raise his head above the storm,—
He tried to muster up his fagging powers,
Collect his thoughts—arrange them into form,
And feel that yet, in some near future hour,
He'd win the fight, and wear a victor's crown.

What ailed the man? Was he so much at fault?
It seemed that Fate was hard upon his heels!
It seemed that fortune never meant to halt,
Or listen to his pleadings and appeals.

When but a lad there seemed no one to care,
Or give him words of council and advice,
Or feel the least concern how he should fare;
Or heed how far he'd plunge in sin and vice.

Although the snare was set, he did not drift
Far in the paths of sin, but gave his life
To God; and from that hour began to lift
Earth's burdened ones from sorrow and from strife,
Yet on him fell the world's most crushing frown.
He plodded on and ever did his best,
Unmindful as to what the world might say.
He thought of others, then he left the rest to God.
—1915.

THE STRANGER

A stranger said to me one day,
As I chanced to pass him by;
"I can't be pure and true and good,
No matter how I try.
It is not that I want to be
So sluggish in my thought,
Nor is it that I do not know
Exactly all I ought;
But all the time there seems to be
Some other reason why,
The baser forces pull and haul,
To hinder when I try."
The other forces in thy life,
"The baser," do'st thou say?
Are things that must be overcome,
If thou would'st win the day.
To help thee in the strife, to gain
The battle from the foe,
To help thee toward the pure and good,
Triumphantly to go,
And help thee the victory to win,
Each force that's pure and true,
Will lend to these a helping hand,
And teach thee how to do.
—1915.

FLOWERS!

With thorns and briars on either side my way,
My hands and feet were bleeding sore all day:
Then Jesus called with voice supremely sweet,
The thorns all fled, and flowers entwined my feet.
I looked and saw One fair as the morning sun,
And lo, I found this way, the paths to heaven run.

AMIDST THE WILDS

Well, boys, if I should tell you half the things,
That I have truly seen and felt and known,—
The wild adventures through which I have been;
The savage fury men and beasts have shown,
'Twould simply raise the hair upon your head,
And you would wonder why I am not dead.

Suppose I tell you one or two of these
Experiences that I've been passing through,
While yonder in the wilds of foreign lands,
Where homes are not, and huts are very few,—
Where men supposed I was their deadly foe,
And guarded me wherever I would go.

One time my business called me far away,
Where I should be at very early morn,—
Before the sun would show his golden light.
My brother workers tried in vain to warn
Me not to venture on that way alone!
The peril was too great, as had been shown.

But fool I was, and took the daring risk.
So early in the morning, long before
The light of day began to streak the sky,
Or e'er the morning star began to soar
Above the distant hills, I stole away
And said, "I'll reach the town before 'tis day!"

An hour's walk, (for I had gone afoot),
And I was in a wild and lonely wood
Where giant trees were very thick, and tall;
With foliage so dense o'er where I stood,
That not one star could send a ray of light
To aid one in the blackness of that night.

The night was still. Not scarce a cricket's chirp
Was heard to break the awful stillness there.
The leaves above made not a rustling sound;
Not e'en a friendly owl could anywhere
Be heard. My own foot-fall among the leaves
Sent echoes bounding from a thousand trees.

I softly hummed to keep my spirits up,—
When, Hark! There sounded plainly on my ear
The distant sound of soft and springing tread.
It seemed a long way off, at least not near
Enough to do me harm. But who could tell
But that it scented me! I stopped a spell.

The tread stopped suddenly. I stood stock still:
No breath of sound was near,—all still as death!
I started on; again the step was plain.
I was not frightened, but my heated breath
Came rapidly, till heaving from my breast
Came panting sounds that could not be suppressed.

I swiftly ran. It went as fast as I,
And faster too, for by the sound I knew
That it was nearing me. When I would run,
Whate'er it was the faster came on too.
The pace was now so near that I could see
That running so was not assisting me.

I therefore ceased to run, and standing still
I looked behind along the path I came,
And there beheld two flashing balls of fire.
Not twenty yards away, and all aflame
A tiger crouched,—a huge and monstrous thing,
And seemed as though 'twas ready then to spring.

What could I do? My gun I'd left behind!

No club was near: too dark to use one,
Even if there was. A low and awful growl

Gave warning that the creeping had begun.
My only weapon was a human voice.
I used it well: it was my willing choice.

I gave a whoop, such as might raise the dead.

Shrill echoes pealed a voice from everywhere,
Till from the fearful shouting one would think,

That, save for lights, old Gideon's host was there.
I screamed and yelled, and Nature helped me there,
And with each sound went forth an earnest prayer.

His flashing eyes dropped downward out of sight.

It was so dark that I could see no form.
It seemed like ages,—those few minutes, till
Between vibrations of my vocal storm,
I heard the springing tread upon the leaves,
In leaping bounds, far out among the trees.
—1915.

INVITATION

Each sunbeam's aim to bless the weary heart,
Each dew-drop, sparkling in the morning hour,
Each blessing, of whatever kind or sort,
That fills the heart with life and joy and power,
Are all but invitations broad and clear,
To men of every clime and every race,—
If they can but the invitation hear,—
To flee from sin, and find the God of Grace.
—July 11, 1905.

TO THE REV. AND MRS. A. B. HESTWOOD

Just five and twenty years ago to-day,
A man and maiden, young and strong and gay,
Stood side by side before the smiling throng,
While all of Nature chimed in merry song.
Beside the sacred altar there they stood,
And for the ill, or for the noble good,
Each clasped the other by the willing hand,
And pledged the marriage vows should ever stand.

To-day, a daughter, brilliant, handsome, fair,
Betrothed to one of noble, worthy name,
Stands by his side before the altar, where
The marriage covenants are just the same.
The parents of this fair and happy bride,
To-day their mid-way station have passed by;
While bride and bridegroom, launched out on the
tide,

With joy and hope the starting passage try.

A silver crown of all the happy years,
Is pressed upon each parent's favored brow;
With grateful, overflowing hearts and tears,
Before the Christ their loving Lord they bow,
And press the crown of silver, bright and fair,
Upon the Saviour's sacred, worthy brow,
And ask of Him the humble servant's share,
Of all His heavenly grace can yield them now.
—1905.

ETERNITY

This mighty world, that seems to us so vast,
Is but a speck in God's great universe.
The longest life, so slowly creeping past,
Is but a moment filled with blight and curse,
As we compare it with eternity,
And with the bliss and glory that shall be.

ON THE PLAINS IN 1885

The night was bright as Orient pearl,
The air was chill, the sky was clear;
The sleepless world was all awlirl,
And sleigh-bells chimed in merry cheer.

We started o'er the crisp, white snow,
Our three bells jingling merrily;
Our rig was built for flashy show:
Out for a grand good time were we!

The sled was new, therefore untried;
Made by a skillful man, they say,
Who, all the training of his mind
Had taxed from day to day.

Away we drove, heads lifted high.
The sleigh went gliding like a charm;
"We'll prove her worthy, in this try!"
Nor thought we of the slightest harm.

But then, "Whoa! ho! ho! ho—o-o—
The runner there, is up-side-down!"
And with a laughing loud "My oh!"
We piled out on the frozen ground.

We fixed the sled; once more we went.
But Fate decreed we stop again.
It seemed that trouble had been sent,
Our pleasure trip to turn to pain.

At last we halted near the door
Of the main Church within the town.
We were an hour late,—or more:
That runner would turn up-side-down!

The service over, then we turned,
A pleasant homeward ride to take;
All thoughts of trouble had been spurned:
For trouble, after all's a fake!

But then, alas! When scarce half way,
Back to the peace of our abode,
The runner of our gallant sleigh
Broke down, and left us in the road.

What then to do? that was the thing!
A ride like this to fail, to fail!
We could not rope to the spring,
So slid it on a long fence rail.*

We reached the house all safe and sound;
And none but we did surely know,
But that we had a joyful round,
While gliding swiftly o'er the snow.

That was a ride, out on a "lark";
The ride of all the season, best!
But not a ride in a city park,
'Twas in the wild and wooly West.

Now my advice to friend or foe,—
To all abstainers from the cup:
While riding o'er the glistening snow,
To keep the runners right side up.
—1887.

*Bobs on a common spring wagon.

THE MAGI

In the midst of a rustic old castle of stone,
With a quietness reigning sublimely supreme,
There was once an old gentleman, seated alone,
Close beside a low window through which fell a
stream
Of the bright silver moon-light, so mellow and soft,
That uplighted his face with a halo of glory.
So possessed was the man,—so absorbed was his
thought,
He was dead to all else, but intent on the story,
That he read in the stars which were shining
above,—
A sweet story of beauty, a story of love.

He 'roused himself and placed his trembling hand
Above his eyes, which sparkled like a flame.
Then musing to himself he softly said:
"A wonder here appears, a star is born:
A new and brilliant star is born to-day!
I see him rising yonder in the East,
And on him flames the message of a King.
Forth to the West my dromedary here,
Shall bear me out across the distant plains,
To where this gentle star shall lead me on.
My friends will hither, too, this very night,
For sure it is, they have not missed this sight!
For years, together we have watched the sky,
And noted well the stars, which all in tune,
Have seemed to sing of one, that, coming soon,
Would, when it came, announce a new-born King:
Now it has come, let all the angels sing!
A Son is born, the gift of God on High."

And now my gentle reader, let me call
Attention to this sage of ancient time,

And study well his melody sublime,
As in the night he chants the lofty strains,
And note the message which he seemed to read
Amidst the shining stars. He stood erect.
A gorgeous robe, bedecked with jewels rare
Fell flowing from his shoulders to his feet.
In build he was both graceful, tall and strong;
His face and eyes were darkest shades of brown,
His hair and flowing beard were streaked with gray;
His brow was high and broad, his features fine;
His countenance was radiant with joy.

He reached and took a curious horn and blew
Three gentle blasts, but all the while his eye
Was fastened to the spot, where in the sky
The star had first appeared, and still shown forth.
The blasts he blew were very slight, but at
The call a slave sprang from his silken couch,
And stood before the master: "Didst thou call?"
He asked in quiet voice, and bowed his head
Until his forehead touched the earth. The sage
Looked up; he clasped his trembling hands and said:
"Make haste, prepare the dromedary, e'er
The morning light shall streak the eastern sky;
For yonder is my 'Star of Hope', and I
Must haste me on to find the new-born King!
Equip him for a journey o'er the plains—
A long and trackless chase o'er deserts wild,
For I must hie me hither e'er the light of day,
To meet the sages now upon the way.

The hour was dark, as from the gateway of
An Oriental castle, old and gray,
A traveler came hastening far beyond
The hills, the wadies and the scrubby trees,

And soon was merging to a wide expanse
Of sandy, trackless plains. Now we might see
A great white camel, in a swinging trot,
And well equipped by hand and skill and thought
For weary stretches o'er the burning sand;
A miniature awning fixed secure
Above a small and curious looking cage,
And girted firmly to his back, in which
Reclined a man in perfect calm repose.
His eyes were closed, his brow was knit; he looked
Not to the right or left, nor raised his eyes,
Nor seemed to note the course in which the huge
White dromedary sped in even pace
Along the trackless waste of pure white sand.
The sun had risen above the distant hills,
But he looked not behind, nor seemed to note
The dazzling glare upon the wide expanse
Of sand, where not a shrub or spear of grass
Was seen, to break, or check, or cool the rays
Of sunlight as it poured down from above.
His course was west, due west without a turn.
The stately camel did not slack his speed,
Nor deviate his course, till suddenly
He halted, bowed his long and graceful neck,
And gave a moan, or wincing cry, just such
As he was wont to give when tired. It was
His call for rest and food. The hour was noon.

The traveler aroused himself,
As from a long and dreamy sleep.
He turned and scanned the horizon
On every side by steady sweep
Of vision, carefully and long.
No living creature was in sight.
He bowed his head,

Though not in dread,
For "Hé who leadeth me will guide
My true and trusty friends aright."

He bade his camel kneel, and placed his foot
Upon its neck and sprang upon the ground;
And then again with shaded eyes he scanned
The distant plains, but nothing was in sight.
Within a little leathern pouch he fixed
The dromedary's noon-day meal, and said,
"Come, eat, thou racer with the swiftest winds,
Come, eat thy well earned grain and provender!"
And gently stroked the silken coat of hair.
Then from beneath the cushioned seat on which
He had reclined through all the morning hours,
He took a roll of yellow cloth, from which,
He built a small three cornered tent, just such
As caravans across the desert plains
Had used since nomad hordes have roamed the
earth.

He spread a gorgeous linen napkin in
The center of the space within the tent,
And placed an ample luncheon there for four.
No pains were spared until he was content
With all the preparations he had made;
And then once more, with shaded eyes he looked
Far out across the trackless plains of sand,
And as he gazed he saw a tiny speck,
That seemed to slightly move, as if with life.
Before his steady gaze the moving spot
Of something dark upon the field of sand,
That seemed to merge from where the earth and sky
Appeared to meet, grew larger. Then he saw
A camel's steady, swift and even pace.
With course undeviating as a line,

He came as if inspired. He too was white,
And strong and tall. He halted close beside
The other. The traveler awoke as if from sleep;
He stirred himself, dismounted, and the two
Returned to each his country's own salute:
"Jehovah's blessing be upon thy head!"
The Hindu cried, "Thou too hast seen His Star?"
"Thou soul inspired of God! Peace be on thee!"
The other cried, and bowed his face to earth.
"The noon-day meal I have prepared for four,—
The third is coming: But alas, the fourth?
I see him not, and yet 'tis time that he
Was coming near to meet us in our quest."
While thus the Hindu spoke, the Greek drew near:
They bowed and welcomed him with open arms,
And while they waited yet for still another man
Each told the story of his faith and hope,
And of the leading of the gentle star.
The time passed swiftly by, and soon the sun
Was hastening westward on his eveing run.
The heat was less intense. No passing cloud,
Or kindly tree, to give them shade, were there,
And almost blinding light was everywhere.
The three had kept beneath the shelter of
The tents. The Greek was last to tell his tale;
When he had done they all seemed deeply moved,
And bowed their heads in simple grace and prayers.
The Hindu spoke: "Our Parthian brother, lo,
Doth not appear; 'tis strange he is delayed.
We should be going soon, the sun is low,
And we should make a dozen leagues at least,
Before the middle watch, and time to rest:
But must we, brothers, tarry longer yet?"
The priest of Egypt counceled that they stay
Until the mid-night hour, and should he not

Arrive, then they would hasten on alone.
They fixed their couches for the hour's sleep,
And laid them down beneath the watchful stars.
At mid-night they awoke: no one was near.
The air was calm and cool, the sky was clear,
The distant mountain peaks were gleaming in
The mellow light of the descending moon.
Each mounted on his camel and sped on,
Toward the western shore where they had dreamed,
The holy King of heaven would come and reign.

MY LORD AND I

It was the Christ who found me when a wandering
boy,
And filled my soul with love, and with a gladsome
joy.
And now I'm going to a land beyond the sky;
So hand in hand we're walking here—my Lord and I.

O yes, we're walking here,
In fellowship so dear,
'Tis bliss to feel His presence now,
As at His sacred cross I bow.

Sometimes dark clouds may send a shadow o'er my
way,
And seem to hide the Son of that Eternal day;
Then with His tender touch, He ever draws me nigh;
So on His loving breast I lean without a sigh.

The tempter comes, and with his darts, me through
would thrust,
And try to shake in Him, my confidence and trust;
But at my Saviour's feet the vanquished darts now
lie;
And so I rest complete in Him, my Lord is nigh.

REMINISCENCE

'Twas back in Eighteen Ninety-five
That Fate decreed that we should drive,
 With all we did possess,
Into a town where we might live,
From which the Gospel we could give
 To those we might address.

Elk City seemed the chosen place,
Of all the towns who'd given race
 In which we now should settle;
And so, to make my story short,
We lived in town, after a sort,
 And waged a mighty battle.

We all were strangers when we came,
But soon the people learned our name,
 And thus we got acquainted.
Evang'est Miller with his tent,
For holiness seemed fully bent;
 This some folks fairly hated.

But victory was coming nigh,
As Miller let the bomb-shells fly,
 Though men would sometimes falter.
But Rhodes and Spahr and sturdy Vick
Close to the Holy Ghost would stick,
 With Millsap coming later.

Although not known, we were not dumb,
But now and then put in a bomb,
 That kept the battle moving.
A multitude thus swelled the throng,
With testimony, praise and song,—
 For help was us behooving.

The power seemed to wake the dead,
When Barnes would speak, or M. Drybread,
Who told the very hour,
When he had died to sin no more,
And, prostrate on the kitchen floor
Received the Spirit's power.

So on it went. The meeting closed,
And everything seemed more composed
But still the fire kept burning,
And now and then we found a soul
Who needed Christ to make him whole,
And for this power yearning.

The time passed on so swiftly by,
And soon the time came drawing nigh
When we must leave the city.
It came from Christians day by day,—
And sinners too were heard to say,
"O what a sad, sad pity!"

We never shall forget the part
We've had with you. With earnest heart
We've told the sacred story.
The words of comfort and of cheer,
That you have spoken in the ear,
Will tell to His own glory.

One evening we were all at home,
When from my study I did roam
To do the evening chore,
Here Dr. Wright and Mr. Ray
Came walking down the busy way,
While talking something over.

They said, "To you we here present
That which our citizens have sent,—

A badge of our affection.
Accept this splendid suit of clothes,
For this is what we all have chose
To get with our collection."

"You thrust my soul by this great love!
All praise to Him who reigns above,
For all His wondrous blessing.
To you who thus have shown your care,
Jehovah bless you! With this I'll wear
Rich robes of heavenly dressing."

SERVICE

O my brother, for what are you living,
As the years flit so rapidly by?
Does the world fill your heart's sad misgiving?
Do you find service dreary and dry?

All of service is drug'ry that's selfish,
Or that's done with a motive impure;
But the earnest heart-service is relish—
The rewards are abundant and sure.

There is One who can teach you the lesson,—
The great lesson of service so sweet,—
Who will give you a wonderful passion,
To lay trophies at His blessed feet.

This soul passion will fill you with glory,
Yes, a glory that never grows old,
If you tell out the beautiful story,
O so precious, more precious than gold.
—1916.

THE BETHLEHEM SHEPHERDS

The evening sun was lost behind the distant hills—

Out in the billows of the surging sea,

White clouds above were glorious to see—

And then the stars with gentle light all heaven fills.

A band of shepherds, caring for their flocks by night

Were looking far beyond the pasture fields,

And thinking of the hand that guides and shields,
While drinking in the beauty of the glorious sight.

They felt their spirit much subdued as darkness
drew

Its curtains round, and left the world at rest;

While in the soul—with gentle love possessed—

Were thoughts of God, supremely sweet—sublimely
true.

The flocks were still, and not a prowling beast of
prey

Was heard from far or near, o'er hill or dell.

The shepherds spoke in softened tones to tell
To each the sacred thoughts which thrilled his soul
that day.

The mid-night hour was drawing near, and not a
sound

Disturbed the quiet of the herdmen there

On Bethlehem's green-clad hills and valleys,
where

A thousand years before, King David's flocks were
found.

The stillness of a quiet hour was such a time

As God could send his message to them, and

They could the message hear and understand:

Their mind was ready then to hear the voice sub-
lime.

"Look yonder!" all at once they cried, "what is it
pray?"

At just that moment, all around them there
A light was shining with a constant glare
Which lighted up the mountain side as bright as day.
They strained their eyes to see from whence the
light had come,

"The heavens are ablaze with fire!" they cry.

Then on the ground they sank, as if to die,
As suddenly an angel's brightness struck them dumb.
And then the stillness of the scene was broken by
The sound of a majestic voice which said:

"Be not afraid, but cast away your dread.

For messengers of God are coming from on High.

"Behold I bring to you good tidings of great joy;

For unto you, and all the world, is born

This day, a Saviour, which is Christ the Lord,

And He will give you peace without the least alloy.

"And this shall be the sign by which you all may
know:

Thé Child is bundled up in swaddling clothes—

Lies in a manger where the fodder goes—

There you will find Him lying, when to him you go."

And then the sky was filled with angels, bright and
fair:

With harps atuned, and voices wondrous sweet;

They joined the angels in a chorus meet—

Their music floating out upon the mid-night air:

"All glory be to God, Most High! and on the earth

Sublimest peace to all the race, Good will

From God to man who on the earth may dwell!"

And sang His praise on that the Saviour's day of
birth.

The shepherds turned them from the mountain scene
that day,

And to the city went in quest of Him

Whose light before, on them had shone but dim;

And found Him in the manger on some new mown
hay.

The peace and joy that came upon them to abide;
Which from all sin completely made them whole,
And filled the longing of the hungry soul—
This was the glory of the shepherd's Christmas tide.

SUNRISE ON THE HIMALAYA MOUNTAINS

(Suggested by an address by Bishop Warne of India.)

Come, lovers of beauty, and go out with me,
And look toward the peak of that mountain and
see,

In early glad morning, by break of the day,
The beautiful streams of the sun's gleaming ray.
We'll carefully clamber to summit just here

And wait a brief moment as morning draws near.
We'll over-look valleys—see lofty peaks too,

When snow-covered towers will loom into view.
Now, look very closely, don't miss the first sight

Of Everest's high peak in the gleams of delight!
'Tis radiant with beauty, and gladsome surprise,
As the sun sends great bars out across the clear
sky.

Old Everest stands of all mountains the highest,
And touches the stars of the morning the nearest,
So catches the glory of sun's early rise,

When sunbeams alight on snow crystals and skies,
Till bars of Aurora illumine the scene—

Till other peaks, radiant with beauty are seen,
The soul is enraptured—sublime 'tis to me,

For now they come faster till scores we may see.
And now we sit back all enraptured in glory—

No painter on canvass can picture the story—
And study the beauty, which poets can't tell,

For the hand of Jehovah has painted it well.

SWEET MEMORIES

The following verse was written as a tribute to the author's family, Mother, Brothers and Sisters, May 27, 1896.

To the Circle I'm writing a few words of love
Some words of encouragement, hope and of cheer,
That may help us ascend to that bright home above
Beloved, please lend us a listening ear.

To our mother who's given the best of her days,
In guiding our feet in the infantile years
I could never speak aught but continual praise
In noting the years spent in prayer and with
tears.

Under God we each owe to that steadying hand,
And that of a father who now beckons "Come"
All the good and the holy we have in this land.
Heed well the wise council in days yet to come!

Unto Daniel I'll say, Be thou faithful and true,
For time is now flying so swiftly away,
And the work is important God gave thee to do.
Wait not till the morrow, but hasten today!

Then to Lizzie, whose troubles have been very sore—
Ah, Jesus hath carried thy sorrow away.
May the grace that's abundant abound to thee more
Be earnest and true to the work of today!

Sister Hannah, 'tis long since thy face I have seen.
I pray for thee often, and love thee the same,
I am sure that still faithful to God thou hast been
And working in earnest in His blessed name.

Now to Sadie I'm speaking in words soft and tender;
Thou hast an affectionate place in my heart
For thy prayers and thy councils so well I remember:
May neither of us from the Saviour e'er part.

Brother William, the one who inspired the right
And led to the place by the dear Saviour's side,
I have looked upon thee with my boyish delight,
And now may we seek at His feet to abide.

Lovely Esther was quiet, with little to say,
She was a true lady, a friend to her brother.
Just the same faithful Christian, each day after day,
In yon kingdom above we will meet one another.

But Lydia, companion of boyhood and youth,
Of all, thou to me was the dearest and best,
Embodiment, thou, of both virtue and truth,
May thy life unto many, yes many, be blest!

Now Charlie, the next, though much younger in
years,
Hath always a true and warm place in my heart.
Be thou ever faithful midst sunshine or tears,
For Jesus hath promised ne'er from thee to part.

And to Thomas, the younger, thou heardest the call
To carry the light of the gospel away,—
To go out in the highways and cry to them all;
O then hasten to rescue the fallen today!

Then to Martha, the baby, the pet of thy brothers:
Thou scarcely remembers beginning to pray;
Thou must follow the footsteps of our sainted
Mother,
Very close to the Saviour endeavor to stay.

Now as for myself, in the years that have flown,
I need hardly refer since the days of my youth,
The flower then budding may never have blown:
I'm a servant of God and a lover of truth.
—1896.

THE UNDEFILED

Psalm 119-1

O Lord our God, to be thus undefiled,
And walk within thy holy law, we pray,
That all thy children may be kind and true,
And feel thy cleansing power day by day.

We cannot hide from thee a single thought,
For thou dost know the secrets of the soul!
Help us dear Lord that we may feel applied
The cleansing flood by which we are made whole.

We would with Christ our Lord condemn the wrong;
We would with Him approve the right and true.
Send thou upon our souls the Holy Ghost,
That he may heal and make our hearts anew.

O Lord, within thy holy word thou hast
Declared him blest who undefiled doth run
Along thy way according to thy Law,
Thou too art there, Thou undefiled Son!

And where thou art we find a bliss supreme,
For thou dost cleanse away and purge our sin
And gives to every one the power and grace,
A life of holy service to begin.

A ROMANCE

It was Fourth of July, a bright summer day
"You'r looking for company, daughter, you say?"
"Oh yes darling Mother, I'm thinking 'twill be
So splendid when you my intended shall see.
The finest young fellow you ever did spy,
Although I admit he's a little too shy;
But that is no difference, for handsome is he,
And honest and manly as he can well be."

"All this, dearest child, I certainly know,
But still I am sorry to think you must go.
You see I am sickly, and do not see well,—
It may be its selfish, but who can just tell."
"You selfish! Indeed not; no, that is not true!
Of all that would hinder, I've thought through and
through.
You see we are planning, arranging it thus,
That you, all your life-time, must live there with
us."

Now John, at that moment came in from the store,
And ushered a gentleman in at the door.
"Well isn't this splendid, and how do you do!"
"Oh I am well, thank you, but pray, how are you?"
"Here, Mother I'd have you to meet Mr. Moon,
My Mother. I did not expect you so soon.
Come out this way please, it's more pleasant out
here,
And may I sit closely, just so I can hear?"

They put in the time quite as busy 's a bee,
Till Mother came out there to call them to tea.
But what the two talked of that bright summer eve,

My readers, I'm sure can easily perceive,
But of this we are certain, and surely must say,
The glad day was fixed e'er he left the next day;
Ah, the long loving letters that passed to and fro!
But of these, we but little or nothing may know.

And now they are married, with pleasures so rare;
We only may say that we think it not fair.
She who went away laughing, will be very soon,
In yonder fair city as Queen of a MOON.
The many rich presents received by the Bride,
Joys mingled with weepings, while still by her side,
Betokened the friendship friends had for her still,
As best of good wishes they showered with a will.

Now must we here leave them to fortunes of Fate?
To dream of the lovely, or dream of the hate?
Or shall we regard them as lost to us now,
And to the grim mandates of dame Fortune bow?
No! Though we must leave them, we gladly will
say:

"The Lord Jesus bless you in all of your way!"
And may they so live while in this world they stay,
As to roam with the angels through one endless day.

* * * * *

NOTE: This poem was composed and written on the occasion of the marriage of a cousin of the author to a young printer, Mr. Arthur Moon, of Junction City, Kansas, in the autumn of 1885, at Council Grove, Kansas.

—The Author.

THE STATE SUNDAY SCHOOL CONVENTION,
MAY, 1905

The Kansas State Convention of the Sunday
School
Was held in Hutchinson, in Spring time, balmy, cool,
Kept busy at the tasks which to it God had given,
The teaching of the Word that shows the path to
heaven.

I want to place in simple rhyme
Some things so good and true,
That came to us from time to time,
Of things both old and new.

"Nearer My God to Thee," we sang;
The notes rose strong and clear.
Throughout the hall the echoes rang
And filled us with good cheer.

With songs and words of welcome true,
The delegates were greeted,—
From business men and preachers too
Most welcome words were meted.

Friend Meridith was great in song,—
The choruses were splendid.
The "Sunshine Choir" helped along,
And praise and music blended.

Professor Pierce, a learned man,
And in the Scriptures drilled,
At nine fifteen his speech began,
The audience was thrilled!

With messages of power and love,
 This holy man would speak
 Of Him who left the throne above,
 The lost of earth to seek.

He told us we should be prepared,
 The holy Word to teach,
 That best instruction be not spared
 Till the whole world we reach.

In this brief story I would tell,
 Some things that did me good,—
 Some things that on my soul life fell,
 That to my life were food.

And thus I speak to you, my friend,
 This message to me given:
 That God may speak to you, and send
 You forth to win for heaven,

Some souls whom you may lead away
 From sin, or shame or crime;
 That you begin this work today
 While yet He spares you time.

For this is true, what 'er you do, you will not pass
 This way again, to save a man, a lad or lass.
 Do not delay,

Do good today,

While still you may!

WHEAT HARVEST

This section's in the "Middle West,"
With very broad and fertile plains,
Which always is so greatly blest
When there are but abundant rains.

The farmer rides his tractor plow,
The merchants at their busy trade,
Each at his task,—must do it NOW!
The sluggard lounges in the shade.

The broad wheat fields are looking green;
The corn and oats begin to grow,
But not a weed can there be seen,
When first alfalfa crops they mow.

This hay all cut,—('t must not get wet!)
Now in the barn 'tis mowed away,—
The best of stuff, you better bet,
For feeding stock on winter day.

This work all done,—the time is near,—
The wheat has turned a golden hue;
The harvest time is almost here,
And I must help, and so must you!

Not one may idly stand around,
This busiest time of all the year;
But up with Robin's earliest sound,
And work while dawn is drawing near.

* * * * *

The farmer wends his way to town,—
The merchant buys his winnowed grain,
And each of them wears, not a frown,
But smiles; each realize some gain.

This one-time desert, growing now
With all improvements that are best—
The auto, and the tractor plow,
All, now are common in the West.

The housewife, from her royal throne,
Calls to her neighbor, miles away
(For every house must have a 'phone,)
And talks at morn, or close of day.

The youngsters romp and jump and yell,
From morn till night, while at their play,
For thus they must, to keep them well,—
So play and romp and yell away!

Contented in their lot they be,
Each working for the other's sake,
For this is best, as you can see,
A happy pleasant home to make.

HUMANITY'S CALL

Come all ye morning stars of light,
Shine down across our darkened way;
And lift us by some gracious might,
Into the realm of endless day.

This awful darkness, O how dread!
This night, how sad, how sad and lone!
Shine on, ye streams of light, instead,
Till darkness all away has flown!

Come all who bear this gracious light,
Of truth's own blessed, glorious dawn;
Come, break this long and woeful night,
Till its last shades are fully gone.

This mournful cry has touched the heart
Of God's pure love and truth and grace,
Which in all haste from heaven start,
Full bounding through the fields of space.

From every mountain, hill and plain—
From highest peak, and valley deep,
There comes this rich and soft refrain:
"Come unto Me, all ye who weep!"

A thousand of angelic throng,
With harps of gold and voices sweet,
Repeat the glad redemptive song,
That calls us to a Saviour's feet.

Ten thousand men catch up the strain,
And flash it o'er earth's darkest night
In sweetest music, o'er again,
In Psalms of life, in streams of light.

The gracious strains of music true,
The sweetest that to earth is given,
Fills this old world with life anew,
And lifts the soul from earth to heaven.

This human call in sorrow given,
For light, and life, and joy and peace,
Was answered from the courts of heaven,
Long e'er we sought for sin's release.
—Nov. 2, 1904.

78 TUE OLD RED HORSE AND HIS MODERN RIDER

THE OLD RED HORSE AND HIS MODERN
RIDER

Revelation 6-3 4

This old tired world, created in the morn of time,
And cared for through the ages filled with deeds of
 crime,
Is crazed with madness, raging on the steeds of
 Red,
And dashing headlong toward the breakers—dark
 and dread,
With no regard for sacred ties, for human blood,
For rights of men, for laws of God or common good.

The old red horse, which in John's vision once ap-
 peared
With rider, sword in hand, with culture all veneered,
Dashed on the track of earthly progress, filled with
 rage,—
Forsook the awful confines of his erstwhile cage,
And foaming at the bit in maddened haste to deal
A fatal blow to everything that men hold dear,
And trample under foot, without a thought of fear,
The sacred institutions which to us most appeal.

The heart of infamy and hate and lust for power,
While posing as a benefactor, every hour
Was dreaming dreams, within his own sin-blighted
 soul,
Of world dominion, planning, teaching that the
 whole
Of this great world was his alone by right divine,
And to his bleak satanic soul the plan seemed fine.

But God still lives! No submarine can ever dive

Beneath the throne of right, nor blow it up, nor
drive

The Christ away from that which is his very own.
Although by that mad break ten million men or
more,

Have given that steed to feast upon their life blood
pure,

They are not dead! And may their lives be held se-
cure

By Him who gave His Son to bring us peace at fear-
ful cost,

That all the good He gave to earth might not be
lost.

For if the blood of Able, innocent and true
Cried unto God for vengeance from the ground,
then new,

And it was heard and heeded by a God who's just,
Then let the cry of millions more be heard to thrust
From power to his own place the soul bedrenched
with blood,

And bring upon him woes in overwhelming floods!
Such is the fervent prayer of many men of God,
Who are willing now to tread the path their Saviour
trod.

A MEMORIAL TRIBUTE

Our erstwhile happy home is now so sad,—
With overwhelming grief our hearts are filled.
No stroke has ever come with this compared,—
Our fond and cherished hopes forever stilled.

Dear Herbert, how we loved him, loved him true!
His life on earth was faithful, pure and good!

Our love for him developed as he grew.
So fine a lad; it seemed he understood!

We did not realize him very frail,
Nor thought that he so soon would slip away.
All human efforts seemed at last to fail,
Till on this earth he could not longer stay.

We mourn his loss, and yet we surely know
He rests securely on the Saviour's breast,
Where we at last, in some glad day shall go,
And share with him the glory of the blest.

Our boy with Jesus lived, communed and talked,
Since consciousness awoke in childhood days,
He always trusted Him and with Him walked;
And felt His mighty hand with him always.

We stand unveiled beside his new-made grave,
Where peacefully the form reclines in rest,
But far beyond the realm of cloud and shade
Our Herbert lives as Christ's eternal guest.

Today he stands with Him in spotless white—
The pearly gates stand open deep and wide.
Redeemed and purified in glorious light,
He rests beside life's sparkling river side.

And though our eyes are filled with bitter tears,
Our broken hearts throb on with grief and pain,
We know its but a few brief fleeting years,
Until we all shall see our boy again.

To the Rev. and Mrs. F. C. Fay, Lyons, Kansas, at the
death of their eldest son, Herbert, May 25, 1905.

SOUTHWEST KANSAS CONFERENCE,
PEABODY, 1905

The spring was opening bright and warm,
And, preachers coming by the swarm
To a place which had a special charm,
In southern Marion County.
The preachers came from far and near,
And each his best tried to appear,
To give reports, and then to hear
Of God's most gracious bounty.

Peabody was the chosen place,
And though it filled but little space,
Was brimming full of splendid grace,
And gave us royal welcome.
The homes they gave us were so fine,
That each declared, "The best is mine!"
Homes rich and splendid, and refined!
We find the like but seldom.

Good Bishop Joyce, saintly and sweet,
The preachers all were glad to greet.
He brought to us a message meet,
This old dark world to brighten.
Our brother Hestwood preached at night,
A sermon filled with holy might,
And gleaming full of gospel light,
The heathen world to lighten.

McFarland came from 'way back East,
And Forbes, a dozen more at least,
Each brought to us a gracious feast,
While Miller did the singing.
But Sunday morning, and at night,

Oh, what a blessed glorious sight!
Redemption came with saving might
As we, to Christ were clinging.

The session seemed, of all the best,
And each resolved on Christ to rest,
When Monday brought the final test,
As to where the Lord would send us.
We listened to each parting word,
Then each put on the Spirit's sword,
And bid adieu, our faces toward
Our homes we then did bend us.

O Lord, to thee our thanks we give,
Because that thou hast let us live
To see this blessed holy hour,
And witness thy redeeming power.
And may, this year, we give to thee
All of the glory there may be,
And grant that we may meet again
Next year, in Hutchinson. Amen.

THE ECHO

There comes now wafted on the morning air,
Sad sounds of pathos from afar,
From weary souls whose burdens Christ would bear,
Yea who would be their morning star.

But ah, poor souls they do not seem to know,
Of Him who bore their load of sin,
And millions to the shrines of idols go,
And vainly seek cleansing within.

A few of them have seen a strange new light,
In little glimmering streaks of morn,
And now the cry from out the age of night,
F'or light to guide, and heal and warm.

O friend, from out the battle din of life,
Stop for a moment, lend an ear,
And see of now from out this dismal strife,
A plea for help you may not hear.

When heard, we feel the breathless cry to sweep
Not only from the distant shore,
Like echoes o'er the mighty watery deep,
That we should bear the message o'er.

But from the pearly gates that stand ajar,
Yea, from the throne of God above,
We hear the echo of that cry afar:
"Go tell the people, 'God is love' "!

Jehovah, God wilt thou this moment give,
To all thy people ears to hear
Thy call divine, that these poor souls may live?
And grant to send thy Spirit's power near.

Great grace and power from God the Father given,
For all who labor here below:
By light divine the age-long night is riven,
Borne by the messengers who go,

At Jesus' call and at the heathen cry,
Which wafted on the morning air,
From those who perish yonder, and who die,
Comes fraught with pleadings and with prayers.

FOR CONSIDERATION

The people bred in vilest city slums,
And fed upon the revenues of death,
Will germinate a future for the State,
That none, with unconcern can contemplate.

Perhaps you never dreamed, or cared to know,
That really it matters not how vile,
And wicked, or how ignorant, or wise,
A man still has a body,—Rich the prize!—
A body, heir to pain and suffering,
A soul to be redeemed or be destroyed,
And heart-felt feelings that may wounded be,
By cruelties that you may never see,—
A mind from which, in ceaseless floods will flow,
Into the soul-streams of the Nation's life,
The strong red blood of virtue and of health,
Or weakness, fraught with a corroding death.

Or did you ever think that all the wan
And wasted children of the city slums,
Form part and parcel of the common State
Or that their power would be as sure as fate?
That when their minds are blighted, and their souls
Are brutalized by low and base desires—
(And things like these are being done each day,
To children of our fair America,—)
That these, in years to come, when they have grown,
May prove a menace to our Nation's life;
And yet for whom, as the occasions try,
You may be called upon to fight, and die?

And did you ever think, or meditate,
Midst all the blessings here accrued to you,
That every slattern hag that roams the street,

Of a restricted section,—one whose feet
Take hold on hell, is a component part,
Of this great land which you have loved so well?
That she may love the flag as well as you,
And 'neath its colors claim protection, too,
And stoutly hold herself a common heir
Of liberties which have come down to all
Throughout the ages of our history?

Or did you ever ask the reason why,
That every birth, that all who live and die,
In this fair land of our United States,
In many senses strike your very life?
The instruction, then, that robs and kills,
Debauches soul and body, mind, and fills
The land with anarchy and hate and crime,
Is enemy to you and every man
And should be hated as you hate all sin,
And fought until the victory we win;
But why we don't—That is the mystery.

WOMEN'S WORK

One day there came a man of SIN,
And just beside a cottage door
Old satan's work tried to begin—
A work that all good folks deplore.

His tent was not so very strong,
Nor very large, or high or great,
But had therein the germs of wrong
That lead to Torment's awful gate.

Some people whom the world calls "weak,"
With hearts aglow with loyalty,
Performed that day a gallant feat,
Like Patriots did the Boston Tea.

Their names we'er not ashamed to call;
They should be in the halls of Fame;
And though we may not know them all,
High heaven calls each worthy name.

All armed with hatchet, staves and sword,
And filled with consciousness of right,
Relying on the holy Word,
And trusting His eternal might.

These royal women rallied round—
And men,—there were a noble few—
And smashed the curst thing to the ground.
That host was OUR W. C. T. U.

'Twas Pawnee Rock, a small like town,
That witnessed such a noble fight,
That satan slunked off with a frown,
And hid himself in deeper night.
—1905.

THE TOUCH OF KINDNESS

I saw a smile, unto a poor man it was given,
And he was bent and gray and old.
The sun broke forth, and lo I saw that smile in
heaven,
And it was wrought in purest gold.
Gold of such marvelous luster ne'er was given us;
It made the very noon-day sun more luminous.

I saw a weary, toiling woman, sinking down,
Footsore, discouraged and so cold.
A gentle touch aroused her,—then her tattered
gown

Was wrought into the purest gold;
Straightway it grew without a flaw, and will be
shown
To smiling throngs who gather round the great
white throne.

Wrought into gold! Then we who pass life's fleet-
ing hours,
With little thought,—so carelessly,
Might make the barren dusty way a path of flowers,
If we would scatter seeds each day.
If every gentle deed we've done, or kindness given,
Were wrought into pure gold, 'twould make us rich
in heaven.

SINAI AND ZION

O Mount of old, thine awe display,
With fire and wind and smoke!
In Sinai's dread and awful day,
Of fearful lightning stroke.

The thunder's fearful crash and roar,
Oft made the people moan,
As from the heights God spoke once more,
Or wrote on slabs of stone.

So fearful was the awful sight,
That Moses cried, "I quake!"
The people said, "Give thou us light,
Let not Jehovah speak!"

The voice that spake then shook the world,
The mountains rocked and fell,
But now He speaks, and heaven is moved
A Saviour's love to tell.

We now may come to Zion's mount,—
The place our Lord has trod,
And feel the precious healing fount,
And fellowship with God.

A kingdom to us He has given,
That cannot moved be,
Wherein we serve the God of heaven,
Who reigns eternally.

Chorus: .

Immovable kingdom He's given,—
A kingdom for one and for all,
In rightness to serve Him for ever,
Who answers the dear Saviour's call.

UPON THE DEATH OF A FRIEND

Our life on earth is very fragil;
We soon, ah soon must pass away;
Then o'er the seas eternally sail,
Whereon we'll roam the endless day.
The waters of that mighty deep
May smooth, or rough exceeding be;
The heaving, surging blasts may sweep,
Or sunshine calm the eternal sea.

Earth's sorrows come full thick and fast,
But sunshine now and then breaks through.
The fragrance of the flowers last,
Much longer than our sorrows do.
Our father dear, we loved him true,
Though many a path was strewn with thorn,
Our hearts throb on in love anew,
As life ebbs out on this sad morn.

Thy life, thy trials on earth are past;
Earth's sorrows all are swept away.
The cold chill hand hath come at last,
And sternly claimed his helpless prey.
We know that God hath known thy life,
And that He still does answer prayer;
The trusting soul He lifts from strife,
And showers comforts everywhere.

There's only One who knows our heart,
Our trials and our every joy;
Who to us comfort can impart—
To send us Life His hosts employ.
He knows the grief of this sad hour,—
The depths of sorrow, sad and deep!
'Tis Jesus who alone hath power,
To comfort all whom this day weep.
—July 24, 1905.

MOTHER'S VOICE

I knew a voice so tender, kind,
I seem to hear it all the way,
The music of that voice sublime—
It lingers with me ev'ry day;
I learned to love it when a boy,
E'en then it made my heart rejoice
The same to me in tears or joy,—
The music of my mother's voice.

Chorus:

My mother's voice my soul to greet,
In merry song or evening prayer,
Like pure angelic music sweet,
Falls o'er my pathway ev'ry-where.
A hand of tenderness of touch
Once guided tender infant feet,

Oft tucked me in my little couch,
And guided me to quiet sleep,
Or gently bathed my fevered brow,
And watched with tenderness and care
Till bell tolled out the mid-night hour,—
Still rocking in her easy chair.

My mother's heart and voice and love,
In cheery song or evening prayer,
Were moved by impulse from above,
While heaven's glories she did share;
God came into that blest old home,
And let His glories ever shine.
Still o'er those fields I love to roam,
Where precious memories are mine.

A mother's love, unbroken still,
Is looking out with pride and joy,
And praying that the Master will
Still guide, protect and save her boy;
O shall I disappoint her trust,
And spurn her love—her tears despise?
Kind angels bear this news to her,
That I will meet her in the skies.

TWILIGHT MEDITATIONS

The peaceful twilight hour had come;
The sun had overtopped the hills;
The busy rush of day was done,
And stilled were factories and mills.

I drew aside my old arm-chair,
And sat me down to think betimes.
My soul was clamoring to share
The music of the twilight chimes.

The day had been so full of care—
Of giddy whirl, of foolish greed,
Of selfish seeking everywhere,
The body and the mind to feed.

But ah, alas! what had the soul,
To satisfy its burning need,
To heal its wounds, and make it whole,
From out of all this worldly greed?

I meditated, prayed and thought,
Amid the hush of twilight hour;
And then the Christ came near and bought
My soul, and filled me with His power.

OUR BABY

Our precious flower has flown away,
And forms a golden tie,
That bind us to the realms of day,—
That home beyond the sky.

So short the stay,—a little while
And yet our hearts were won,—
By prattle and the happy smile,
Of our sweet little one.

With bleeding hearts, with sorrow bowed,
With grief so sad and cold,
We look away from casket—shroud
To the streets of shining gold.

There, even there our babe now rests,
Our Lord has said, "He's Mine!"
O Saviour, thou alone knew best!
And all we have is Thine.

Dear parents of this lovely one,
Whose hearts are bleeding sore,
His trials are o'er, his joys begun,
No death nor sorrow more.

For just inside the shining strand,
With gold-tinged wings so fair,
He's tripping o'er the golden sand,
With flowers everywhere.

With angels on the shining shore,
Who've tuned their harps to sing,
His little voice, now hushed no more,
Makes heaven archways ring.

Some joyful day you'll see him there,—
Earth's stormy trials all o'er,
His glories and his joys to share,
Where parting is no more.
—July 9, 1905.

AT THE FUNERAL OF A FRIEND

The cords of love that nature ties,
Are stronger made by love,—
A love so strong it cannot die—
Akin to that above.

These cords have been most rudely torn
Asunder by death's grasp,
And saddened hearts are made to mourn,
Yet clinging, to the last.

All human help, however given
Is feeble at the best;
Then cling to Him who reigns in heaven,
And you are fully blest.

Dear Sister, and these children too,
O hear the Saviour say,
"My grace,—it is enough for you!"
'Tis just the same today.

Although your hearts may sorely bleed
With sorrow, deep and sad,
The Christ supplies your every need;
In Him you shall be glad.

The grief that burns so deep today,
Is healed by power divine;
Believe and trust in Him, and say,
"We are forever Thine."

Our loved ones who have slipped away,
They who have known His love,
Are blessed triumphantly today
With all the saved above.

The following verse has appeared anonymously in print in quite another form, and is arranged in the present form for this work.

SPRINGTIME

O Welcome glad Springtime, thrice welcome art
thou,
With sunshine and clouds and soft showers!
How gladly the birds chirp their sweet evening song,
While children are plucking the flowers.

The grasses creep up from their long hidden sleep,—
The fields are all shaded with green;
The rosebuds from out of their slumber will peep,
Fulfilling their long winter's dream.

The sun shining brightly throughout the glad day,
 The moon proudly ruling the night,
 Or the radiant bow swinging out o'er the sky,
 And the lightning quite dazzling our sight.

But each of them tell of the glorious Spring,—
 The time in which all in their might,
 With Nature's glad chorus its praises may sing,
 And in its bright presence delight.

A SONG OF LOVE

I saw a flower of rarest hue,
 Far up the mountain side
 It sparkled as the morning dew
 I viewed it with much pride.

I tried to climb the rugged height,
 And claim that fairest flower;
 The path was rough and full of fright,
 E'er that triumphant hour.

The flower was a maiden fair,
 With handsome face, and sweet;
 Her perfect form, her golden hair;
 Her beauty was complete!

At last I gained the wished-for place,
 And clasped her to my heart;
 Then looked straight in her smiling face;
 From her I could not part!

THE DEPARTURE, OR BROKEN BY DEATH

There came, by chance or Providence, into my life,
 A joy, a comfort sweet, when I became his wife.
 The briefest four and twenty years fled quickly by,

Just as the days and years of happiness doth fly;
Then like a mighty crash from out the sky above
Death claimed a separation of our sacred love,
When he upon whose arm I often had reclined
Sped out to the eternal and I was left behind.
The hand of death is cruel, but God is loving, kind,
And opened wide the portals thru which I may behold
The souls of those made perfect, roaming the fields
of gold.
The love death would have broken has more intensive grown,
Because the Father, God, Himself true love hath shown.
—Oct. 1917.

LIFE

O days of happy sunshine in the soul!
That fills the life with melody and bliss,
The fragrant flowers strewn along the way,
That touch the soul with Nature's cheering kiss
These fill the life with happy joy and song;
They lift the heart to glories bright and gay,
And lead the feet with merry step along,
And wreath the face in smiles the livelong day.

Such is the life that braves the wildest storms,
And smiles, and smiles the darkening gloom away,
Whose eyes have seen the Christ the Blessed Life,
And in the fullness of His love doth stay.
O give to me a life of power like this!
And then whatever may befall me here,
With confidence I'll answer every call:
For I am sure my loving Lord is near.

A FABLE

A dollar and a penny, once—it happened in some
way,—

That found themselves together in a farmer's purse
one day,

Fell into conversation, so I've heard some people say.
The little penny thought himself of all the earth the
heir;

And then of course, the dollar stood, his head high in
the air,

Declaring his importance o'er the other of the pair:
"The big gun sure I am," said he, "but you're a little
guy—

A worthless little imp, I trow, that could not should
you try,

Grow large and great, and clear and white, a god-
dess such as I.

Religious too, behold, to all I say, 'In God we trust,'
While you are only pagan, sir, and clad in yellow
dust;

I'm loyal too, and patriotic to the core. You must
Have seen upon my heart the goddess of sweet lib-
erty;

America's bold eagle here you should not fail to see:
Yea, if there's one important factor in this world its
me!"

In weak and piping voice the penny cried, "That
may be true!

That people worship at your shrine is neither
strange or new,

Now in the offerings of the Church I'll give my place
to YOU!



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